



# M E D I A   R E L E A S E

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
15 MAY 2007  
07-21

CONTACT: NATE CRAWFORD  
615-313-0793(OFFICE)  
615-714-8638(CELL)

## **Two student nurses receive award for saving the life of National Guardsman**

NASHVILLE -- It was September 26 of last year, on a frigid day just after 4:00 a.m., and Tennessee National Guard Major Don Spradlin was driving to work in the early morning fog. A vehicle suddenly appeared from a side road, cutting him off and forcing him to swerve to miss the vehicle.

He slammed into a steel I-beam support at a service station.

Maj. Spradlin's car was completely wrapped around the I-beam. His face was crushed; he had a cut through his tongue; a cut through the lower lip to the chin; multiple fractures of his left arm; left femur, his hips and lower back ... and he was going into shock.

Only minutes later, Michelle Griffin and Angela Stevens, student nurses enrolled at Chattanooga State Technical Community College, arrived on the scene and took charge without hesitating.

Angela and Michelle immediately asked the police officer on the scene if the person in the vehicle was alive. He responded that he "didn't know" but that the man was trapped inside. The car that caused the accident had never stopped.

Angela tried to open all of the doors but they were jammed, so she climbed in through the rear window which was broken out by the impact. Once she was inside, they asked the officer to assist Michelle into the car through a side window.

Then they both went to work.

Angela assessed the patient. Michelle stabilized his head and neck and they both helped clear his airway of teeth, blood and bone fragments. He was gurgling and having great difficulty breathing.

They kept him calm and oriented until the EMS crew arrived. Then for two hours while the emergency crew cut the roof and windshield away, the student nurses stayed in the vehicle with Spradlin under a fire blanket, keeping his airway clear and controlling the bleeding.

He was also in shock and they kept him calm and comforted until he could be transported to the hospital.

PO BOX 41502  
NASHVILLE, TN 37204  
615.313.3001

## **Student Nurses 2-2-2**

Maj. Spradlin would later say, "Those two ladies saved my life."

In an extraordinary twist of fate, Spradlin, a Physician's Assistant, had saved the life of a Tennessee Guardsman in Iraq a year before his own life was saved by the nurses.

For their actions the student nurses were awarded the National Guard's Certificate for Patriotic Civilian Service, signed by Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, Chief of National Guard Bureau in Washington.

The presentations were made by Brig. Gen. David Greer, Tennessee's Assistant Adjutant General, during May 4 "pinning" ceremonies in Chattanooga for the 96-member class graduating from CSTCC the following day.

At the ceremonies, Gen. Greer described the two incidents as, "yet another proof that God has a master plan for each and every one of us, a plan over which we have no control."

Stevens, from Tracy City, and Griffin, from Monteagle, received a standing ovation from their classmates as they accepted their awards.

The award states:

**For exceptionally meritorious service in humanitarian support of Major Donald Spradlin, Tennessee Army National Guard, on 26 SEP 2006. You selflessly and courageously rescued this soldier from life-threatening conditions. Your immediate response and decisive actions stabilized the soldier and enabled EMS members to remove him from a serious vehicle accident without further injuries. Your dedication to service and the preservation of human life is in keeping with the highest honors of your profession and reflects great credit upon you, Chattanooga State Technical Community College and the United States Army.**

### **PHOTO:**

**Student nurses Angela Stevens (left) and Michelle Griffin, who saved the life of National Guard Major Don Spradlin last year, are presented an award for Patriotic Civilian Service by Brig. Gen. David Greer, Tennessee's Assistant Adjutant General. Joining in the presentation is Maj. Spradlin. (Photo, Betty Proctor, CSTCC)**

**(File Photo on page 3 below)**

####

**All Tennessee Army and Air National Guard press releases can be found at**  
<http://www.tnmilitary.org/PressReleases.htm>

